

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (currently amended): A method of treating endotoxic shock in an animal ~~by inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin, said method comprises the step of comprising:~~

administering a pharmacologically effective amount of basic fibroblast growth factor to said animal; and

inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin thereby treating endotoxic shock.

Claim 2 (original): The method of claim 1, wherein said animal is a human.

Claim 3 (currently amended): The method of claim 1, wherein said basic fibroblast growth factor is administered in a daily amount of ~~from~~ about 0.1 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg.

Claim 4 (currently amended): A method of inhibiting lipopolysaccharide-induced endothelial apoptosis ~~resulting from endotoxic shock~~ in an animal ~~by inhibiting the generation of~~

~~ceramide from sphingomyelin, said method comprises the step of comprising;~~

~~administering a pharmacologically effective amount of basic fibroblast growth factor to said animal; and~~

~~inhibiting the generation of ceramide from sphingomyelin thereby inhibiting lipopolysaccharide-induced endothelial apoptosis.~~

Claim 5 (canceled).

Claim 6 (original): The method of claim 4, wherein said animal is a human.

Claim 7 (currently amended): The method of claim 4, wherein said basic fibroblast growth factor is administered in a daily amount of ~~from~~ about 0.1 mg/kg to about 100 mg/kg.

Claims 8-10: (canceled).